1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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partakes of a farewell pudding cooked by her mother.[1] Then, with her face painted red and herself now carrying a basket of yams, she is escorted to the house of the bridegroom. The pigs are handed over one by one without ceremony, beginning with the smallest, and distributed among the bride's relatives. If the last and biggest has attained the size of re-entrant-tusker, a conch-shell trumpet is blown. The bride is now left with her husband. Formerly he would have already built a house for her, but with the incipient disintegration of native culture he is now, as a rule, too lazy, and the couple live together either in his own house or in that of his father while he slowly constructs a new one.

Godefroy's Account

Godefroy's account[2] is longer and more graphic, and, while omitting some of my facts, contains others omitted in my record.

Words used for "marry."

To express the act of marrying they use a word, the root of which is common in almost all dialects, namely *lage*, together with the corresponding substantives *lagean*.[3] This is the true word meaning "to marry" or "marriage." In Vao there is a second word, which does not appear to go to the bottom of the matter as does the first, but which indicates rather the symbolic gesture, namely *tuka*, "lead into the house" (a native takes a woman into his house only in the case of marriage). When one hears the words "*Mal-kali mo tuka vavine*," literally "Mal-kali has led a woman," everyone knows that this means "Mal-kali has just been married, he has taken a woman."

Betrothal.

This is how the natives perform the marriage contract. Let us take a typical case. Melte-sale is a young man 18 or 20 years old; his parents have decided that the time has come for him to marry. They themselves choose the spouse, a girl who has been nubile for a year or two. They make their decision known to the young man. If he makes no objection, this is a sign that the choice pleases, and that he agrees.[4]

[1] Speiser (3, p. 295) states that if the bride is still very young she is provided with false breasts made of painted coconut shells. False breasts made in this way are worn by young men taking the part of women in the *na-leng* mumming plays described on p. 338 of this volume, but I never heard of them being worn by young brides. Speiser states also that the bride's mother on this occasion places a yam on the girl's lap as a fertility symbol.

[2] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 117-21. Paragraph headings and footnotes are mine.

[3] My spelling of these words is *lagh* and *laghean* (see p. 133). Cf. Mota *lag*, "to marry"; *lagia*, "marriage."

[4] Elsewhere, however, and contrary to my information, Godefroy says, "It is the mother's brother who makes it his business to find his sister's son a wife, whom he himself chooses."